Mr. Aiyan Kali (Member, Nominated) also dwelt at length on the difficulties experienced by the Pulayas in getting lands registered. He pointed out that, on account of the failure of the Forest Department to remove the tree-growth on the 500 acres of land in the Vilappil *pakuthi*, sanctioned to be registered in the names of Pulayas, the lands were not likely to go to their possession in the near future. He prayed that early orders be issued to remove their grievances. The lands ordered to be registered in the names of Pulayas in Kottarakara and other taluks of the Quilon Division and also at Kazhakkoottam in the Trivandrum Division were, he learnt, being assigned in favour of others. Many Pulayas had made improvements on certain lands in the hilly tracts at Ranni, Koni and Mundakayam. Those lands also should be ordered to be registered in their names. The Government should also devise some means to ensure that the lands registered in the names of Pulayas did not go out of their hands and he suggested that some such arrangement as was made in the case of the *pudurals* at Vilappil would answer the purpose.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

13. Grant of concessions in respect of the registry of *puduval* and *poramboke* lands in the names of converts to Christianity from the depressed classes.

Mr. Abraham Isaac (Member, Nominated) said that the representations made by his community in the past for the grant of lands for their abode had not met with favourable results, that they did not get *tharisu* lands on account of the interference of the wealthy higher classes who invariably succeeded in getting good lands registered in their names, and that a few men from the depressed classes succeeded in getting lands owing to the timely help and support of their Missionary benefactors. Certain tracts in the Manchadikkara *pakuthi* of the Changanacherry taluk, Vadayar *pakuthi* of the Vaikom taluk, Piravom *pakuthi* of the Muvattupuzha taluk, Kanjirappalli *pakuthi* of the Peermade taluk, Aiymanam *pakuthi* of the Kottayam taluk, Ariyad South *pakuthi* of the Shertallai taluk and Ranni *pakuthi* of the Chengannur taluk had been occupied and improved upon by the converts from depressed classes several years ago under the impression that those lands were Pandaravagai *tharisu*; but subsequently influential people turned them out on the ground that the lands were *porambokes* and grazing grounds. The very men, however, applied for their registry afterwards. The lands known as *Kanakapalam* in Survey Nos. 369/1 and 370/1 were improved upon and cultivated by Pulaya converts and they deposited the Government dues in the Mundakayam court; but the Christians and Mahomedans of the place forcibly turned them out and attempted to plant rubber, etc., on those lands. The Member prayed that necessary orders be issued to the Mundakayam Magistrate to save them from the hardships complained above. He also requested that a list of lands to be assigned to the men of his class be published in the Gazette and that the Ennakkachira in Manchadikkara *pakuthi* and Kuttanchirachal in the Vadayar *pakuthi* be ordered to be registered in the names of such converts, for paddy cultivation, in preference to other applicants.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

14. Hardships caused by the inaccuracy of Survey and Settlement operations and by the working of the Land Conservancy Regulation, IV of 1091.

Mr. G. Harihara Iyer, B. A., B. L. (Member, Parur taluk) said that the subject had been taken up in some form or other by more than one Member of the Kottayam Division, thus showing the real hardship felt by ryots. The main principle kept in view in the recent Settlement and in the subsequent changes in the land revenue system was "upholding that which is right, amending that which is faulty and improving that which is defective". To achieve that end, several Regulations and rules were introduced. A Scientific Survey was made the basis of settlement. All lands within the cultivated area were ordered to be demarcated, measured and mapped and a permanent record was ordered to be prepared showing the exact extent and boundaries of each holding. The Proclamation of 1040 M. E., the *Magna Charta* of the Travancore ryot, converted lease-holds into free-holds and placed Sirkar

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Pattom lands, whether included in the *ayacut* or registered since, on a better footing. Subsequently, to remedy the grave defects in the existing revenue arrangements, a regular and comprehensive scheme was ordered in 1058. The Boundary Regulation of 1058 was passed with a view to better definition and security of property.

Subsequently, it was found that *ayacut* measurements were partial and incomplete, as embracing the cultivated lands only. To improve the then situation a complete survey and re-assessment of the entire State was ordered "embracing an accurate measurement, demarcation, mapping and valuation of properties of every description and registration of titles." That was done by the Royal Proclamation of 1061, a work calculated to promote the well-being and prosperity of the State. Later on, the Land Conservancy Regulation of 1067 was passed to restrict the occupation of Government lands. It defined also Government lands as distinguished from other lands.

As a result of the above Regulations and rules, all lands in the State were surveyed, classified, and defined and *pattas* issued to the respective holders. It, however, brought within its train the consequential disadvantages also. It was found that the Survey and Settlement operations were long delayed and ryots put to all sorts of difficulties. Seeing the long delay and inaccuracy existing in the Settlement, the famous Memo of Dewan V. P. Madhava Rao C. I. E., was prepared in 1904, which clearly provided also for the disposal of applications relating to *poramboke* lands. The new scheme gave an impetus to the Settlement operations. Since the Settlement operations were completed in the Kottayam Division in a comparatively short time, the results achieved were unsatisfactory. Civil suits and Revenue complaints swelled to such an enormous extent that the congestion of work caused thereby in courts had not even now dwindled. The Survey of the seven northernmost taluks was entrusted to classifiers. In those taluks, the mapping of sub-divisions by classifiers with no technical knowledge of Survey and Plotting did not always represent the actual state of affairs on the ground. The system of Land Records Maintenance was then introduced and the Village Accountants were set to find out the discrepancies in the last Survey, plant stones at the various points and prepare stone-maps. In accordance with that scheme, many *pakuthies* had now been re-surveyed and A, B &C Registers prepared. But that too was not completed. Various rules from time to time were passed regarding the classification and registration of *poramboke* lands. None of them did really effect any change or redress the grievances of the ryots. The so-called settled and registered areas, especially in the northernmost taluks referred to above, were really un-settled; and now to crown the existing evils, the Land Conservancy Regulation, IV of 1091, was passed through the Legislative Council in hot haste, apparently to remedy the present state of unsettled things. But the result was a complete chaos, and the poor ryots were driven from court to court, with no redress whatever in the majority of cases.

The present method of ascertaining *porambokes* within and outside the Towns was far from satisfactory. Taluk Surveyors were appointed all over the State. But the supervising officers were the Tahsildars, who were not fit for effectively supervising the work of Taluk Surveyors. With an incomplete and inaccurate Survey and Settlement, the present method of fixing and ascertaining *porambokes* with the aid of such officers was not only unsatisfactory but was also productive of undesirable consequences. At present all lands, whether registered or not, were surveyed not less than three or four times by such inexperienced officers, arriving at different conclusions every time, with the result, that a premium was offered to corruption, and the ryots were left completely at the mercy of such officers. New *poramboke* areas were discovered in the midst of registered holdings, and, when registry of such lands was applied for, rightly or wrongly the registering officers fixed prohibitive rates of *tharavila* and imposed exhorbitant fines. The policy of the Government had, on more occasions than one, been laid down thus :—" The assessments for *poramboke* as well as unreserved lands should ordinarily be fixed on the analogy of the rates adopted for adjoining registered lands of similar description." But that policy had never been uniformly adopted, nor even the rules passed in 1090. Old trees standing within registered areas and in the enjoyment of the ryots for a long time were declared to be

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Sirkar trees and auctioned by the Government the next day. In other cases, such trees were labelled as P. W. D. trees and they met their fate in another way. Old boundary fences and walls were ordered to be dismantled at a moment's notice and fines inflicted. Bunds erected at heavy cost by the side of registered holdings to prevent the action of the river were ordered to be pulled down. The breadth of the roads and lanes within and without the towns was extended at the pleasure of the Town Improvement Committtee President and the Tahsildar, thus forcing the ryots to give way from their registered holdings. Complaints presented in cases of real hardship were unheeded.

The situation of the ryot was thus really pitiable. Unless some radical changes were effected in the present *poramboke* enquiries, binding the surveying and registering officers to a reasonable standard, one could not imagine how things might culminate in the long run.

The real question then was how to solve the difficulty. The rights of Government had to be safeguarded without detriment to those of the ryots. The only reasonable solution of the difficulty lay in a process of re-Survey. Seeing that the recent Survey and Settlement operations were quite incomplete and inaccurate, to force the present Land Conservancy Regulation on the ryots was too hard. To ask for a re-Survey might be considered to be too much. But such a re-Survey was most necessary at least in the case of the seven northernmost taluks. The working of the Land Conservancy Regulation should be done smoothly and the enforcement of the penal clauses under the Regulation should be suspended until the next Survey. The Tahsildar, with Magisterial duties and with the volume of Criminal cases he had to get through in a year, scarcely found time to inspect the so-called *poramboke* encroachments and supervise the work of the Taluk Surveyors. The separation of the Revenue and Judicial functions in all taluks was highly necessary and especially so in Parur Taluk ; and a memorial to that effect had been submitted to the Government. Lands lying within registered boundaries and long in the occupation of the ryots should be registered in their names, provided it did not, in any way, reasonably affect the rights and needs of Government. Complaints addressed to the registering officers should be reasonably and patiently heard and, in all cases, copies of *Olugus* should be supplied to the ryots, whenever required. Security of person and property being the main principle of the Government in introducing the abovesaid Regulations and rules, the orders to demolish the fences, long-standing walls and even houses by the side of *thodus* running through registered areas should be discouraged in all cases. The Taluk Surveyors and Tahsildars, when they set to work to discover cases of *poramboke* encroachments, should give previous notice to the ryots before inspection, call for all documentary evidence in the possession of the ryots and satisfy themselves that the encroachments were real. The infliction of fines should be moderate and in all cases where the hardship was very great, the so-called *poramboke*, which the registering officer considered had been encroached upon by the ryot, should be registered in his name at a moderate rate of assessment and *tharavila*. That would not only relieve the hardship of the ryot but would also show a decrease in litigation.

In that connection a word about the Land Conservancy Regulation, IV of 1091, and a few instances of hardship caused by its enforcement would make the situation clearer. The new Regulation, supposed to be an improvement on the prior Regulation, was really an encroachment on the rights of subjects. The definition of the term "Government land" was very comprehensive, giving the benefit of the doubt to the Government in cases of dispute. Though the Regulation provided for appeals and reviews, very little good had resulted so far.

Dewan.—I would draw your attention to one fact, namely, that. when the Bill was introduced into the Legislative Council, neither at that time, nor when it was referred to the Select Committee, nor when it was considered by the Council section by section, was any objection raised by any of the non-official Members. Apparently, they thought that there was nothing objectionable in the Bill.

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The Member, continuing, said that the officers concerned in fixing *porambokes* took away any portion of the registered holding, leaving the ryots to litigate about it. The amount of fines inflicted under sections 6 and 7 was abnormal and the method of eviction under section 9 was unhappy.

Taking all the above difficulties into consideration, the policy of the Government should, the Member contended, be as far as possible to safeguard the interests of the ryots to the utmost. He also pleaded for sympathy and moderation in the infliction of fines and for the suspension of the penal clauses of the Regulation till the next Survey, which should be effected as early as practicable, at least in the seven northernmost taluks.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

(2) Forest Revenue.

15. Forest administration in Travancore.

Mr. P. S. Maruthanayagom Pillai (Member, T. I. C., Padmanabhapuram) said that the defects in the forest administration had been again and again placed before the Government at successive sessions of the Assembly, that no good results had followed in consequence, and that, though prior to 1054 there was no scientific exploitation of the forests, the condition of the forests was much better then.

It was for the systematic and scientific management and working of the forests that Mr. Bourdillon was pressing upon the attention of the Government from 1070 the necessity of preparing Working Plans for all the Reserves. As a result of that, 12 years hence, the Working Plan for the Shendurni Working Circle was sanctioned by the Government in 1082. The reports for the Yerur, Kulathurpuzha and Arienkavu Working Circles were sanctioned by the Government only towards the close of 1091, though it was stated, in the Administration Report for 1084, that the Working Plan Reports in respect of the above Reserves were almost completed in 1083. The working of the Sandalwood tracts in the Anjanad Valley was also stated to be in accordance with the Working plan. The delay in the submission of the Working Plan Reports for the three Reserves mentioned above was inordinate. Though the Report for 1087 made mention of an Assistant Conservator as having been entrusted with the preparation of the Working Plan for the Malayattur Reserve, nothing further was known about it. It was stated, in the report for 1084, that a Ranger was appointed to report on the conditions of the Forests in the Southern Division and that, at the close of 1084, the report was under the consideration of the Government. Though the Report for 1088 showed that the above report was sent back to the Assistant Conservator with certain remarks by the Conservator, the report had not been submitted to the Government yet.

Scientific exploitation of timber was not being carried on, to the injury of the forests. Mr. Bourdillon was of opinion that over-extraction of timber was injurious to the forests in the long run, as, by doing so, the forests would be devoid of tree growth within a few years. Over extraction of timber was being carried on now, though, for some time past, the department had not followed that policy. The revenue under abandoned and inferior timber also considerably went up in recent years. That did not show a healthy sign. The increase under that head would be detrimental to the interests of the forests. The work of sowing and planting was not regularly carried out; and the work carried out from 1081—1089 was not commensurate with the amounts spent.

Regarding the forest revenue, the Member said that the increase in revenue was due to the increased exploitation of timber and that, if in any year a less quantity of timber was exploited, the revenue for that year showed a substantial fall. Another reason of the increased revenue was due to the abnormal raising of the tariff rates for the different species of timber. The tariff rates were steadily increased from 1082, with the result that the people of the country found it extremely difficult to get timber. The people did not get timber at the tariff rates.

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